

National

Uttarakhand gets new air link

Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami on Thursday 26 March inaugurated the Dehradun-Pithoragarh flight service, reducing travel time to one hour. Highlighting the UDAN scheme's role in making air travel affordable for common citizens since 2016, he noted its strategic importance for border connectivity. Furthermore, the new UDAN 2.0 initiative (approved by the Cabinet on March 25) aims to develop 100 airports and 200 heliports over a decade (FY 2026-27 to FY 2035-36), specifically targeting remote and hilly regions with a ₹29,000 crore budget. He added that currently, 26 air routes are operational in the state under the UDAN scheme. To further enhance connectivity in remote areas, the "Uttarakhand Air Connectivity Scheme" was launched in 2023, under which regular flights are currently operating on six routes. Over the past four years, the number of heliports in the state has increased from 2 to 12, while helipads have grown from 60 to 118.



PM Narendra Modi inaugurates Jewar Airport to ease Delhi-NCR congestion

On March 28, 2026, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Phase 1 of the Noida International Airport (Jewar), marking a milestone in India's aviation infrastructure. While addressing the event, the Prime Minister highlighted that the airport would serve as a major catalyst for development in Western Uttar Pradesh and the NCR. He specifically mentioned cities like Agra, Mathura, and Meerut as primary beneficiaries. Varanasi, located in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, was not mentioned as an immediate beneficiary of this regional connectivity project.



India's First Hydrogen Train Trial Marks Green Rail Milestone

India's first hydrogen-powered train is set to operate between Jind and Sonipat in Haryana. Developed by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, the train recently completed its oscillation trials conducted by the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO). This 10-coach train is currently the world's most powerful hydrogen trainset on a Broad Gauge platform, producing zero carbon emissions as it emits only water vapour. The project supports Indian Railways' goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions through green hydrogen produced via electrolysis.

RBI Payments Vision 2028

On March 28, 2026, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) officially announced the 'Payments Vision 2028' document. This strategic roadmap aims to further fortify India's digital payment ecosystem, which currently handles nearly 50% of global real-time transactions. Key focus areas include enhancing cross-border payment efficiency through PSS Act and FEMA reforms, ensuring TReDS interoperability for MSMEs, and introducing the Domestic Legal Entity Identifier (DLEI). This initiative cements the RBI's statutory role in regulating secure, scalable financial technology.



India approves new NDC targets for 2031–2035

India's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for 2031–2035 sets a target of achieving 60% of its installed electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2035. This reflects a significant increase from the earlier 40% target for 2030, which India has already surpassed ahead of schedule. The move highlights India's strong commitment to clean energy transition, climate mitigation, and sustainable development, while aligning with its long-term goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070.



RBI Imposes 100 Million Dollars Daily Cap on Forex Market Positions

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently directed banks to cap their net open rupee positions at 100 million dollars by April 10, 2026. This tightening of forex rules aims to stabilize the rupee amid geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and rising crude oil prices. While some banks fear losses from unwinding positions, experts like Samir Arora suggest banks may already hold profits due to the rupee's recent 4% depreciation.



Government Expands PM-WANI Initiative with Over Four Lakh Public Wi-Fi Hotspots Nationwide

In a major boost to nationwide broadband penetration, the Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) scheme has officially crossed the landmark of 4 Lakh operational Public Data Offices (PDOs). Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia confirmed this achievement in April 2026, highlighting the scheme's role in bridging the digital divide through a decentralized, market-driven model.

Odisha Police Awarded President's Colour for Service Excellence

Odisha Police received the prestigious **President's Police Colour** also known as 'Nishaan' on 1st April, India's highest institutional honor, on its **90th Foundation Day** celebrated on Utkal Divas, highlighting both historical legacy and modern achievements of the force. Awarded by the Ministry of Home Affairs, this recognition celebrates exceptional professionalism, bravery, and success in **anti-Maoist operations**. By balancing modern technology with citizen-centric policing, the force met stringent criteria, marking a historic milestone in its legacy of maintaining public safety and operational excellence.



Gaganyaan Astronauts Begin Mission Mitra in Ladakh

ISRO's **Mission Mitra** commenced in **Ladakh** on 3 April, involving four **Gaganyaan** astronauts in a high-altitude simulation of lunar and Martian conditions. Short for "Mapping of Interoperable Traits and Reliability Assessment", the initiative utilizes Ladakh's extreme cold and low oxygen to test **psychological resilience** and team dynamics. Unlike technical spacecraft training, this mission focuses on human endurance, stress management, and behavioral readiness, ensuring astronauts can handle the isolation and physical demands of future long-duration spaceflight.



Juang Tribe Girl Leads Change Against Child Marriage

A 16-year-old Juang girl in Odisha has catalyzed social progress by challenging child marriage and health norms within her community. As one of Odisha's 13 **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**, among the **62 tribes found over there**, the Juangs primarily inhabit Keonjhar and Dhenkanal of Odisha. Traditionally hunters and gatherers speaking a Munda-family language, colonial forest restrictions shifted their livelihood toward basket-weaving and barter. This youth-led transformation underscores a vital shift in awareness among one of India's most culturally distinct and vulnerable tribal societies.



India Withdraws Bid to Host COP33 Summit

India has officially withdrawn its bid to host the **2028 COP33 climate summit**, reversing a 2023 proposal made by Prime Minister Modi. In a formal communication to the UNFCCC, India cited a reassessment of its **2028 national commitments** as the reason for this strategic withdrawal. Despite establishing a dedicated preparatory cell in 2025 and gaining BRICS support, the government has pivoted its focus. Following India's withdrawal, **South Korea** remains the only known contender for hosting COP33. This move signals a significant recalibration of India's international climate diplomacy and domestic priorities. India last hosted a COP in 2002 (COP8).

Indian Army Showcases Apache Firepower at Exercise Brahmastra

The Indian Army's Exercise Brahmastra in Pokhran, Rajasthan highlighted advanced air-land integration on April 10, 2026. A significant feature was the **AH-64E Apache helicopters** demonstrating precision strikes using Hellfire missiles and rockets across desert terrain. Often called "**tanks in the air**," these

helicopters proved their lethality in simulated combat. The drill emphasized network-centric warfare, showcasing how coordinated aerial and ground operations enhance battlefield responsiveness. This integration is vital for modern high-threat environments, significantly extending the Army's operational reach and accuracy.



Watan Ko Jano programme

Vice President **C. P. Radhakrishnan** hosted a 250-member youth delegation from Jammu and Kashmir at Uprashtrapati Bhavan under the '**Watan Ko Jano**' initiative on 9 April 2026. This program, supported by the **Ministry of Home Affairs**, aims to foster national identity through cultural exposure. During the interaction, the Vice President praised the region's progress, specifically citing advancements in women's empowerment and the cricket team's historic Ranji Trophy win. He emphasized that such exchanges strengthen the spirit of "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" among determined young minds.

Reserve Bank of India proposes enhanced safeguards to tackle increasing cases of digital payment fraud

The Reserve Bank of India has unveiled a major proposal to stop the misuse of bank accounts by fraudsters. Under the new draft rules, accounts without enhanced due diligence will face a strict

annual credit ceiling of 25 lakh. Any inflows exceeding this limit will be classified as shadow credits. These funds will remain restricted and inaccessible until the account holder provides verification. This move targets mule networks by adding critical friction to suspicious high-value fund movements



Vice President expresses grief over the passing of iconic singer Asha Bhosle

Vice President Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan has formally expressed deep condolences following the demise of the legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle. In a statement reflecting on her seven-decade career, the Vice President highlighted her unparalleled contribution to Indian cinema and global music, describing her voice as a defining element of India's cultural identity. The music fraternity and leaders across the nation have joined in mourning the loss of the versatile vocalist who successfully navigated genres ranging from classical to contemporary pop.

Amidst the tributes, her global achievements have come back into the spotlight, particularly her historic inclusion in the Guinness World Records. The iconic singer was officially recognized as the most recorded artist in music history in 2011, a year that solidified her legacy with a staggering count of over 11,000 solo, duet, and chorus-backed songs. While she received the Padma Vibhushan in 2008 and other honors throughout the 2000s, the specific Guinness certification was awarded in October 2011.



PM Modi to visit Uttarakhand, UP on April 14 to inaugurate Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor

On April 14, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the **₹12,000 crore Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor**, reducing travel time to 2.5 hours from earlier 6 hours. Spanning 213 km, the six-lane expressway features Asia's longest **wildlife elevated corridor** (12 km) and dedicated animal underpasses to protect biodiversity. During his visit, the PM will review these environmental safeguards in Saharanpur, perform pooja at a **370-metre tunnel** near Jai Maa Daat Kali Temple, and address a public gathering in Dehradun to mark this major connectivity milestone. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said that the Delhi-Dehradun Economic Corridor will play a pivotal role in strengthening regional economic growth by enhancing connectivity between major tourism and economic centres as well as opening new avenues for trade and development across the region.



India Approves First Semiconductor SEZ at Dholera

The Indian government on Thursday 16 April 2026 has sanctioned a **66.16-hectare Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Dholera, Gujarat**, for **Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing's** first domestic fabrication plant. With an **investment of ₹91,000 crore**, the project aims to create 21,000 jobs and reduce chip import dependency. This follows 2025 regulatory reforms that lowered the minimum SEZ land requirement for high-tech industries. Alongside Tata, companies like Micron, Kaynes, and CG Semi are investing billions in assembly and testing units, collectively fostering a robust, localized semiconductor ecosystem and strengthening India's position in the global electronics supply chain.



New Postcard, People of India Released

On April 17, 2026, the Department of Posts introduced a **commemorative "People of India" postcard** during an event at New Delhi's Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya. This launch, held in partnership with the Prime Ministers' Museum and Library (PMML), is a core feature of the philatelic exhibition titled **"Ek Bharat, Shreshth Bharat."** The exhibition celebrates national unity and democratic values through various stamps. By highlighting themes such as **tribal resistance, influential women in the freedom struggle**, and diverse cultural festivals, the initiative seeks to educate the public on India's rich democratic legacy and vast multicultural heritage.



Women's Reservation Bill 2026 fails to pass constitutional requirements

The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, which proposed reserving 33% of seats for women in Parliament and state assemblies, failed in the Lok Sabha. Despite securing 298 votes in favor—exceeding the 230 votes against—it fell short of the mandatory two-thirds majority (360 votes). Opposition resistance primarily stemmed from concerns regarding the Bill's link to delimitation, which critics argue could disadvantage southern states. This marks a significant setback in the decades-long effort toward gender-based legislative quotas.

Lok Sabha Speaker reports about 93 percent productivity during the seventh session of the 18th Lok Sabha

The Seventh Session of the 18th Lok Sabha concluded with significant parliamentary debate surrounding the Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty-First Amendment) Bill, 2026. While the session witnessed the introduction of various legislative measures, this specific constitutional amendment was extensively discussed but ultimately failed to pass the House. Although the session handled multiple government priorities, the legislative output remained selective. Notably, the Finance Bill, 2026 followed its standard parliamentary trajectory rather than an immediate passage upon introduction. Despite rigorous floor

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discussions on governance and legal reforms, the session highlighted a focused approach toward pending institutional amendments and banking sector regulations.

Union Cabinet extends Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana Phase Three till March 2028

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the continuation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-III (PMGSY-III) beyond its original deadline. Under the revised guidelines, the timeline for completing bridges in hilly areas has been specifically extended until March 2029 to account for geographical challenges. Meanwhile, projects in plain areas and road works in hilly regions are slated for completion by March 2028. The government also increased the scheme's outlay to Rupees 83,977 crore, focusing on consolidating rural links to agricultural markets, schools, and hospitals to achieve the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.

Government approves revised Dearness Allowance and Dearness Relief for employees and pensioners from January 2026

In a significant move to mitigate inflation, the Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved a 2% hike in Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR), effective from January 1, 2026. This revision elevates the total allowance from 58% to 60% of basic pay, benefiting approximately 50.46 lakh central government employees and 68.27 lakh pensioners. The adjustment, calculated based on the 7th Central Pay Commission's formula using the Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW), carries an annual exchequer impact of Rupees 6,791.24 crore. Beneficiaries will receive arrears following this retrospective update to their salaries and pensions.

Cabinet clears railway multitracking projects across Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, expanding the network by around six hundred one kilometres

The Union Cabinet has sanctioned two transformative railway multi-tracking projects spanning 15 districts across Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. The approved corridors, Ghaziabad – Sitapur and Rajahmundry – Visakhapatnam, aim to decongest critical routes and enhance line capacity. With an estimated investment of several thousand crores, these projects will facilitate smoother movement of passenger and freight traffic, particularly coal, cement, and food grains. This strategic expansion is part of the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, designed to provide seamless multi-modal connectivity and bolster regional economic growth through improved infrastructure.



Poshan Pakhwada 2026 sees active participation of preschool children in Andhra Pradesh to promote nutrition awareness

The 8th edition of Poshan Pakhwada, observed throughout April 2026, has shifted its primary focus toward the critical window of early childhood. This year's central theme, 'Maximizing Brain Development in the First Six Years of Life,' underscores the importance of the first 2,000 days in shaping long-term health and cognitive outcomes. Spearheaded by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the campaign integrates nutritional support with early

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stimulation and play-based learning. By leveraging the Poshan Tracker and community-led events at Anganwadi centers, the initiative aims to sensitize caregivers on the vital link between optimal early nutrition and lifelong human capital development.

'Vishwa Sutra' Unveiled at Femina Miss India to promote Indian handlooms globally

On April 19, 2026, the Development Commissioner (Handlooms) and NIFT launched 'Vishwa Sutra' at the Femina Miss India pageant in Bhubaneswar. This innovative collection reimagines **30 traditional Indian weaves** by integrating international design aesthetics, such as pairing Odisha Ikat with Greek styles and Banarasi with UAE-inspired motifs. Aligning with the 'Vocal for Local to Global' mission and the **5F framework (Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign)**, the initiative seeks to modernize the handloom narrative through contemporary global silhouettes. By showcasing these unique blends, the project aims to enhance international market access and sustainability for India's rich textile heritage.



PM Modi to dedicate India's first greenfield integrated Refinery-cum-Petrochemical Complex

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate India's inaugural greenfield integrated **Refinery-cum-Petrochemical Complex** in Pachpadra, in Balotra,

Rajasthan on April 21, 2026. Built with an investment exceeding **₹79,000 crore**, the facility boasts a capacity of **nine million metric tonnes** annually (MMTPA). This landmark project aims to bolster national energy security and **reduce dependence on petrochemical imports** while catalyzing industrial expansion. Beyond its technical significance, the complex is expected to transform the local economy by creating numerous jobs and fostering socio-economic growth in the Balotra region, marking a major leap for India's energy infrastructure.



PM Modi holds talks with President of South Korea, Lee Jae Myung

South Korean President **Lee Jae Myung** is on a landmark three-day inaugural visit to India from April 20-23, 2026, accompanied by a high-level delegation. Following a ceremonial reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan and a tribute at Rajghat, President Lee engaged in high-level talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to bolster bilateral cooperation and sign several **Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)** on Monday 20 April 2026 at Hyderabad House, New Delhi. The visit highlights the deep civilizational bonds and shared democratic values between the two nations. It aims to expand collaboration in traditional and emerging sectors, culminating in a presidential banquet hosted by President Droupadi Murmu to celebrate this strengthening partnership.

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Cabinet Extends Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana III Till 2028

The Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-III (PMGSY-III) until March 2028. With a revised outlay of Rs 83,977 crore, the scheme focuses on consolidating rural links to markets, schools, and hospitals. Timelines for road and bridge completion have been extended to 2028 and 2029, respectively. This extension aims to bolster the rural economy, improve healthcare and education access, and generate employment, supporting the long-term vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Cabinet Clears Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool to Cut Costs

The Union Cabinet has approved the creation of the Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMI Pool) to enhance India's maritime self-reliance. Backed by a ₹12,980 crore sovereign guarantee, the initiative aims to reduce dependency on foreign insurers like IGP&I Clubs. It provides affordable, uninterrupted coverage for Hull and Machinery, Cargo, Protection & Indemnity (P&I), and War Risks. This domestic safety net ensures trade stability and protects Indian shipping from global geopolitical tensions and sudden insurance withdrawals.

India Aims for 100 GW Nuclear Capacity by 2047

Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized India's emergence as a global clean energy leader through the National Green Hydrogen Mission (₹19,744 crore) and a new Nuclear Energy Mission. India aims for 100 GW of nuclear power by 2047 and plans to deploy five Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) by 2033. The strategy integrates public-private partnerships and policy reforms to decarbonize industries, expand refining capacity, and foster innovation in critical technologies like electrolyzers and biofuels.



International

US paper currency to bear Donald Trump's signature

The US Treasury on March 26 announced that President Donald Trump's signature will appear on paper currency alongside Secretary Scott Bessent's, marking a historic first for a sitting president. This change, effective from June 2026, commemorates America's 250th anniversary. It ends a 165-year tradition by replacing the Treasurer's signature. Officials cited Trump's economic leadership as the rationale, though the move has sparked significant legal and political debate.

United Kingdom Introduces Strict Screen Time Limits for Children

In March 2026, the United Kingdom, led by Prime Minister Keir Starmer, introduced strict screen-time guidelines to protect children's mental health. The advisory recommends zero screen use for children under two years old and limits exposure to one hour per day for those aged two to five. Parents are also urged to avoid screens during meals and before bedtime to prevent sleep disruption and support healthy social development.

Ukraine & Qatar sign Defence Cooperation Agreement

On March 28, 2026, **Ukraine and Qatar** signed a comprehensive defense agreement in Doha during President Zelenskyy's visit. The pact focuses on **missile defense, drone technology,** and exchanging military expertise gained from the Ukraine-Russia conflict. Beyond security, the partnership extends to the energy and technology sectors, marking a strategic shift to strengthen Ukraine's ties with the Gulf region amid rising global tensions.

India Sends Humanitarian Aid to Afghanistan Amid Floods and Earthquakes

India has provided **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** to **Afghanistan**, delivering essential food, medical supplies, and shelter following devastating earthquakes and floods. Despite regional geopolitical shifts, this outreach highlights India's commitment to the Afghan people. Located strategically in **Southern Asia**, landlocked Afghanistan shares borders with Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, China, and a small boundary with India in the northwest. A **5.8-magnitude earthquake on Saturday, 4th April**, in the north killed at least a dozen people and destroyed homes across multiple provinces, while days of heavy rainfall have triggered floods in several regions, worsening already fragile living conditions.

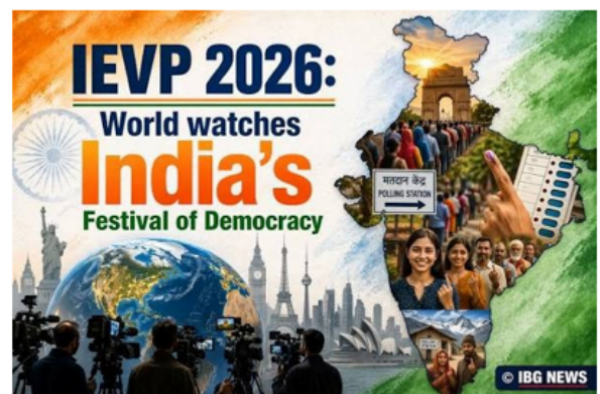


UAE and Bahrain Sign 20 Billion Currency Swap Pact

On April 8, 2026, the **UAE and Bahrain** signed a five-year, **AED 20 billion currency swap** agreement to strengthen regional financial cooperation. This arrangement between the **Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates (CBUAE)** and the **Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB)** allows the exchange of Dirhams and Bahraini Dinars to streamline cross-border settlements and improve liquidity for trade. By promoting the use of local currencies, the pact aims to reduce transaction costs and exchange risks. Ultimately, this strategic partnership enhances monetary stability and bolsters economic resilience across the Gulf nations against global market volatility.

IEVP 2026 draws global attention as India showcases its democratic celebration

During the International Election Visitors' Programme held in April 2026, 38 delegates from 22 nations lauded India's electoral innovations. A standout feature highlighted by the observers was the 100 percent webcasting of polling stations. Monitored in real-time via specialized CCTV control rooms, this system was described by delegates as a strong pillar of transparency for the democratic process. The initiative ensured continuous oversight during the assembly elections in Kerala, Assam, and Puducherry, building immense global trust in India's technology-driven electoral safeguards.



INS Trikanth completes its port visit at Mombasa in Kenya

Strengthening the growing strategic partnership between India and Kenya, the Indian Navy's frontline frigate INS Trikanth successfully completed a significant port call at Mombasa. During this engagement, high-ranking Indian naval officials officially handed over a Quick Impact Project (QIP) alongside essential defense equipment to the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF). This gesture reflects India's commitment to the 'Security and Growth for All in the Region' (SAGAR) vision, focusing on capacity building and medical support for maritime partners.

The highlight of the medical assistance package was the provision of a state-of-the-art 1.5 Tesla MRI Machine, aimed at enhancing the diagnostic capabilities of Kenyan military medical facilities. While modern CT scans and portable units are often part of such exchanges, the specialized 1.5 Tesla unit was the primary technological centerpiece of this specific arrangement. This delivery is expected to significantly improve the healthcare infrastructure available to Kenyan defense personnel and their families.

Peter Magyar Ends Orban Era in Hungary

Peter Magyar (leader of the pro-European conservative Tisza party), once a staunch loyalist of **Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban**, has ended his mentor's 16-year rule after his **Tisza party won Sunday's (April 12, 2026) parliamentary election** by a landslide margin. With votes in 97.35 percent of precincts counted early on Monday, Magyar's centre-right party has secured **138 seats in the 199-seat parliament** and 53.6 percent of the vote. Orban's Christian nationalist Fidesz party won 55 seats with 37.8 percent of the votes, according to official results. Orban conceded defeat, marking the collapse of his long-standing political stronghold. This historic transition reflects a powerful mandate for democratic change and a decisive shift away from Orban's centralized governance model toward a new political era.



India and Austria Sign Multiple Agreements

Following **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's** high-level talks with **Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker** in New Delhi on April 16, India and Austria recently formalized a comprehensive strategic partnership. This landmark visit, the **first by an Austrian Chancellor in forty years**, resulted in diverse agreements spanning defense technology, cybersecurity, and counter-terrorism. Key initiatives include a fast-track investment mechanism, vocational training alignments, and joint research in AI and quantum technology. Furthermore, both nations enhanced people-to-people ties through audiovisual co-production, a **'Working Holiday Programme'** for youth mobility, and increased academic collaboration via the **'Focus India'** initiative, significantly boosting bilateral trade and innovation.



Dinesh Trivedi, India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh

The appointment of former Union Minister **Dinesh Trivedi** as India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh marks a strategic shift toward **political diplomacy**. Departing from the tradition of appointing career diplomats, the Indian government has chosen a seasoned leader with deep regional expertise to manage its longest land border on April 19, 2026. Tasked with strengthening ties under Dhaka's new leadership, Trivedi will prioritize **border security, trade, and water-sharing**. His deep-rooted understanding of West Bengal's socio-political landscape is expected to enhance direct communication and stabilize regional cooperation, reinforcing Bangladesh's status as a top strategic priority for India.



MoS External Affairs Pabitra Margherita to Visit Vanuatu, Tuvalu from April 22

Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita will visit the Pacific island nations of **Vanuatu and Tuvalu** starting April 22. In Vanuatu, he will hold bilateral talks with top leadership and inspect the India-assisted **Centre of Excellence in Information Technology**. During his Tuvalu leg, the Minister will meet high-ranking officials and evaluate ongoing developmental projects funded by Indian grants. This four-day mission reinforces India's commitment to the **Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)**,

focusing on deepening political ties and developmental aid within the strategic South Pacific region.

Bulgaria Secures Stable Mandate in 2026 Elections After Years of Political Turmoil

Rumen Radev and his Progressive Bulgaria coalition secured a decisive victory in the April 2026 elections, winning 44.7% of the vote (roughly 130 of 240 seats). This landslide offers hope for stability after the nation endured eight elections in just five years. Radev, a former air force commander and president, campaigned on anti-corruption and economic reform. While a NATO/EU partner, Radev maintains a 'pragmatic' foreign policy, advocating for balanced relations with Russia despite the Ukraine conflict.



India Leads Global Adoption of AI in Personal Healthcare

A recent report by **Boston Consulting Group** on April 21, 2026, titled 'Consumers Are Ready for AI-Enabled Health Care,' identifies **India as the global leader** in personal healthcare AI adoption. At **85 percent**, India's usage significantly **outpaces the US (50percent) and the global average (60 percent)**. Driven largely by Gen Z and Millennials, Indian consumers utilize AI for

chronic disease management and interpreting results via chatbots and wearables. While the demand for 'agentic AI' to automate tasks is rising, most users still favor a hybrid model combining AI with human doctors, positioning India at the forefront of digital health innovation.



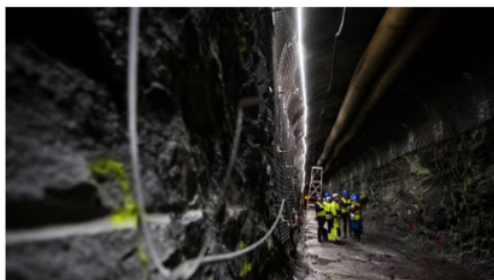
UN Projects India's Economy to Grow 6.4 percent in 2026

The United Nations ESCAP report projects India's economy to grow by **6.4 percent in 2026** and **6.6 percent in 2027**, driven by robust services and domestic demand. While 2025 saw 7.4 percent growth, exports faced headwinds from new U.S. tariffs. Despite global FDI declines, India secured nearly **dollar 50 billion** in greenfield investments. Notably, India remains the top remittance recipient (dollar 137 billion in 2024), though a new 1 percent U.S. remittance tax poses challenges. Furthermore, the report lauds India's PLI schemes for fostering **1.3 million green jobs**, particularly in renewable energy and sustainable technology.



World's First Permanent Nuclear Waste Vault

Finland has developed **Onkalo**, the world's first permanent deep geological repository for high-level nuclear waste on Olkiluoto Island. Built 450 meters deep within stable, inside 1.9-billion-year-old stable bedrock, the facility utilizes a **multi-barrier system**, combining copper capsules and swelling **Bentonite clay** (Bentonite clay is used because it swells on contact with water and blocks radiation leakage pathways), to isolate radioactive fuel **for 100,000 years**. This passive safety design protects the environment from radiation without requiring human maintenance. By addressing the long-standing challenge of spent fuel disposal through domestic accountability and geological stability, Finland's model provides a global blueprint for sustainable nuclear energy and long-term environmental protection.



Ranks/Reports/Indices

IIM Kozhikode enters QS top 100 rankings 2026

IIM Kozhikode (IIM-K) has made its debut in the top 100 of the 2026 QS World University Rankings by Subject, marking a milestone for Indian management education. Published by Quacquarelli Symonds, these rankings evaluate institutions using five 'lenses,' which are Research and Discovery, Employability and Outcomes, Global Engagement, Learning Experience, and Sustainability. This achievement highlights India's rising academic prestige, driven by rigorous metrics like employer reputation and research impact, ensuring a comprehensive global assessment of institutional excellence.



India Records 24,700 Maternal Deaths in 2023

According to the study published in The Lancet and led by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), Nigeria recorded the highest maternal mortality burden in 2023 with 32,900 deaths. India followed with 24,700 deaths, despite achieving a significant 86% reduction in its Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) since 1990. These figures highlight the ongoing global challenge of meeting the SDG target of reducing MMR to below 70 per 1 lakh live births by 2030.

Giriraj Singh Releases Report on Domestic Textile Demand Survey 2024

The report titled "Market for Textiles and Clothing: National Household Survey 2024" was launched by the Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh, on April 6, 2026. The study highlights that India's textile market size grew significantly from ₹4.89 lakh crore in 2010 to ₹14.95 lakh crore in 2024, representing a CAGR of 8.3%.

Crucially, the report reveals a structural shift: Man-Made Fibre (MMF) and blended products now lead the market with a 52.2% share, while cotton-based products contribute 41.2%. Furthermore, household demand has been the primary engine of growth, more than doubling to ₹8.77 lakh crore and playing a pivotal role in driving domestic consumption and per capita spending (₹6,066).

TIME100 2026 Report Highlights India's Global Influence

The 2026 **TIME100** list, released on April 15, underscores India's burgeoning global influence, featuring icons like **Sundar Pichai**, **Ranbir Kapoor**, and **Vikas Khanna** (Culinary Arts/Philanthropy). This selection highlights a diverse footprint across technology, cinema, and culinary arts. While **Pichai** drives global tech innovation and Khanna earns

acclaim for culinary excellence, Kapoor's inclusion signals a shift toward nuanced storytelling in Indian cinema that resonates internationally. Collectively, these figures represent India's expanding **soft power**, blending traditional roots with modern global perspectives to shape worldwide conversations and redefine artistic and professional excellence on the world stage.



Gautam Adani surpasses Mukesh Ambani to become Asia's richest person

According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index 2026, Gautam Adani has reclaimed the title of Asia's richest person, surpassing Mukesh Ambani. Adani now ranks 19th globally with a net worth of \$92.6 billion, while Ambani follows at 20th with \$90.8 billion. On the global stage, Elon Musk remains the world's wealthiest individual, valued at \$656 billion. The report highlights a shift in fortunes, with Adani gaining \$8.10 billion over the year, while Ambani's wealth declined by \$16.9 billion.



Civil Services Examination 2025 results show nearly one third successful candidates are women, indicating broader participation beyond metro cities

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has released the final results for the Civil Services Examination 2025, recommending a total of 958 candidates for various prestigious administrative positions. The merit list reflects a diverse cohort, with a gender-wise breakdown of 659 men and 299 women successfully clearing the rigorous three-stage selection process. These candidates are slated for appointment to the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS), and Indian Police Service (IPS), among other Central Services. The results highlight a continued trend of significant female representation in the top tiers of the bureaucracy, marking another successful cycle for India's premier recruitment body.



Summits/MoUs/Conferences/Agreement

Narendra Modi to Attend G7 Summit 2026 in France

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to attend the G7 Summit in France from June 15 to 17, 2026. This gathering is specifically referred to as the Evian Summit. The invitation, confirmed by the French Foreign Ministry, highlights India's critical role in addressing global macroeconomic imbalances and international partnerships, particularly as India holds the BRICS presidency this year. The summit serves as a platform for India and France to elevate their relations to a 'Special Global Strategic Partnership.'

Delhi Government Signs MoU with Prasar Bharati to Boost Capital as Media Hub

In March 2026, the Delhi Government, through the Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation (DTTDC), signed an MoU with Prasar Bharati at Bharat Mandapam. This initiative aims to transform Delhi into a global media and entertainment hub by creating an integrated ecosystem for film, television, and AVGC (Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, and Comics). Chief Minister Rekha Gupta highlighted that this project aligns with the 'Make in India' vision to strengthen the country's creative economy.



Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan emphasises meditation for clarity at global leaders conference in New Delhi

Addressing the Global Conference of Meditation Leaders, Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan emphasized the transformative power of spiritual practices in achieving global harmony. In a poignant moment of the keynote, the Vice President invoked the timeless teachings of the revered Tamil sage Thirumoolar, specifically referencing his philosophy of 'lighting an inner lamp' to describe the essence of meditation. Highlighting the sage's profound contributions to yoga and spiritual consciousness,

Radhakrishnan noted that such ancient insights remain vital tools for mental clarity and inner peace in the modern era. The conference concluded with a call to integrate these traditional meditative practices into daily life to foster a more compassionate and balanced society.



Vice President inaugurates conference in New Delhi focused on improving tribal livelihoods through science and technology

Marking a significant push for inclusive development, the Vice President, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan, inaugurated a high-level national conference on April 12, 2026, dedicated to the holistic transformation of India's tribal communities. The event served as a platform for policymakers, scientists, and community leaders to discuss the integration of modern tools with indigenous wisdom. In his keynote address, the Vice President emphasized that true progress must bridge the gap between innovation and identity, ensuring that tribal populations benefit from the digital age without losing their unique social fabric.



Science and tech/Space/Defence

Earth Hour 2026

Earth Hour 2026 was observed globally on Saturday, March 28, 2026, from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm local time. This year marked the 20th anniversary of the environmental movement organized by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Under the theme 'Give an Hour for Earth,' millions across 190 countries switched off non-essential lights to raise awareness about climate change. In India, iconic landmarks like India Gate and Rashtrapati Bhavan went dark to symbolize a collective commitment to a sustainable future.



Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad Launches Krishnamurthy Tandon School of AI

On March 27, 2026, IIM Ahmedabad (IIMA) officially launched the Krishnamurthy Tandon School of Artificial Intelligence. This landmark initiative is supported by a significant Rupees 100 crore endowment from Chandrika Krishnamurthy Tandon and Ranjan Tandon. The school focuses on translational research, aiming to bridge the gap between AI theory and real-world business applications. It prioritizes ethical governance, workforce readiness, and strategic adoption to help organizations navigate long-term technological transformations effectively.

Operation Urja Suraksha

In March 2026, the Indian Navy launched Operation Urja Suraksha to safeguard cargo vessels navigating the high-risk zones of the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman. Amidst rising tensions in West Asia, the Navy deployed over five frontline warships, including destroyers and frigates, to provide safe passage for ships carrying critical energy supplies like crude oil, LPG, and LNG. This strategic mission is vital for India's energy security, ensuring uninterrupted fuel imports and economic stability.

CSIR Transfers Bio-Bitumen Technology for Sustainable Road Construction

CSIR has successfully transferred its indigenous **bio-bitumen technology** for industrial use, turning agricultural waste into sustainable road construction material. Jointly developed by **CRRI (Central Road Research Institute)** and **IIP (Indian Institute of Petroleum)**, this renewable alternative matches petroleum-based bitumen in durability. By converting crop residue through thermochemical processes, the initiative creates extra income for farmers and curbs air pollution from stubble burning, supporting India's **Net Zero** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat** missions.



IndiaAI and CDSCO Launch National Hackathon to Boost Health Innovation Ecosystem

Marking a pivotal moment for medical technology, the final intensive phase of the IndiaAI and CDSCO Health Innovation Hackathon is set to take place at the CDSCO Zonal Office in New Delhi. Shortlisted teams will converge for a rigorous 5-day on-premises development cycle to fine-tune AI-driven solutions for the healthcare sector.

This collaborative initiative focuses on building high-impact tools to automate drug regulatory processes and enhance the efficiency of medical device clearances. The New Delhi-based residency allows innovators to work directly with domain experts, ensuring that the developed algorithms meet stringent national safety and transparency standards. By centering the final stage at the heart of India's regulatory hub, the program aims to bridge the gap between cutting-edge software and real-world clinical application.



NASA Launches Artemis II Mission with Crew

NASA's **Artemis II** successfully launched from Florida on April 1, 2026, marking the first crewed lunar mission in over 50 years, successor to Apollo missions (last Moon landing in 1972). The **10-day journey** involves four astronauts, Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch, and Jeremy Hansen, traveling 406,000 km aboard the **Orion spacecraft**. This historic SLS-powered flight validates deep-space systems, laying the groundwork for a 2028 Moon landing and a future permanent lunar base.



Microsoft has launched MAI-Transcribe-1

Microsoft has unveiled MAI-Transcribe-1, a revolutionary speech-to-text model boasting a 3.9% Word Error Rate. Supporting 25 languages, it outperformed competitors like Google Gemini 3.1 Flash on the FLUERS benchmark. Priced at just 0.36 USD per hour, it is 2.5 times faster than previous Azure services. Microsoft also introduced MAI-Voice-1, capable of generating 60 seconds of realistic audio in one second, and MAI-Image-2, a high-performance image generator, further intensifying the global AI innovation race.



Steel Authority of India supplies indigenous special steel for naval vessel INS Taragiri

Marking a significant milestone in indigenous naval construction, the stealth frigate INS Taragiri was officially commissioned into the Indian Navy on April 3, 2026. Underscoring the strength of domestic manufacturing, the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) successfully supplied the entire requirement of special-grade steel for the vessel's hull and superstructure. Reports confirm that SAIL provided approximately 4,000 tonnes of high-tensile steel plates, specifically developed to meet the rigorous durability and stealth requirements of modern naval warfare. This partnership highlights the critical role of domestic steel production in bolstering India's maritime security and reducing reliance on foreign imports for strategic defense assets.

ISRO Launches Mission MITRA for Crew Safety Tests in Ladakh

Launched in April 2026, Mission MITRA (Mapping of Interoperable Traits and Response Assessment) is a first-of-its-kind analog mission conducted by ISRO in Leh, Ladakh. The mission's primary objective is to study the physiological and psychological dynamics of crew members (Gaganyatris) and ground teams in a high-altitude environment.

At an altitude of 3,500 meters, Leh provides a natural spaceflight analog with conditions like hypoxia (low oxygen), low temperatures, and isolation. Designed in collaboration with the IAF-Institute of Aerospace Medicine, the mission maps how teams communicate and make decisions under stress. The data generated is vital for the success of the Gaganyaan programme and future long-duration human spaceflights.



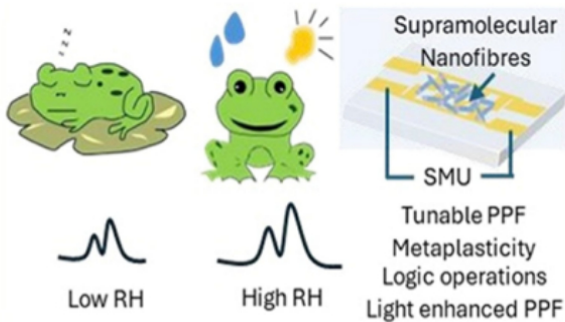
Exercise Cyclone 2026

The Indian Army has sent a 25-member special forces contingent to Anshas, Egypt, for the fourth edition of Exercise Cyclone 2026 starting from 9 April 2026. This annual bilateral drill, held alternately in both nations, focuses on enhancing elite troop coordination within modern warfare. The 2026 iteration involves intensive training in desert and semi-desert terrains, simulating realistic operational environments. By sharing specialized tactics and conducting joint maneuvers, both countries aim to strengthen their strategic defense partnership and regional security cooperation.

Scientists develop frog inspired brain-like sensor

Indian scientists at JNCASR (Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research), Bengaluru have developed a pioneering humidity-responsive neuromorphic sensor inspired by the neural sensitivity of cricket frogs, said a report released on Thursday 9 April. This device integrates sensing,

memory, and processing into a single platform using supramolecular nanofibers, significantly cutting energy consumption compared to traditional electronics. By mimicking biological synaptic activity and learning functions, it addresses the energy inefficiency of modern AI. This breakthrough offers a sustainable solution for edge computing by reducing data transfer delays and emulating brain-like information processing. "This is the first time humidity has been used as the primary stimulus to emulate synaptic behaviour in a neuromorphic device," the research team said.



Female cheetah born in India delivers four cubs at Kuno National Park, showing progress in conservation efforts

The birth of cubs to an Indian-born female in April 2026 marks a historic success for the ongoing cheetah reintroduction project. This achievement validates the Metapopulation management strategy, which aims to establish a self-sustaining population within the country. The initiative originally involved translocating cheetahs to India from Namibia and South Africa to revive the species after seven decades of extinction. Experts suggest that these successful births indicate the predators are successfully adapting to the local ecosystem, ensuring a positive outlook for India's wildlife conservation efforts.



Indian Army contingent leaves for India Uzbekistan joint military exercise Dustlik

Strengthening the strategic military partnership between India and Central Asia, an Indian Army contingent officially departed on April 12, 2026, to participate in the joint military exercise DUSTLIK. This bilateral drill, conducted annually between the armies of India and Uzbekistan, focuses on enhancing interoperability and sharing best practices in counter-terrorism operations within mountainous and semi-urban environments. The departure marks the commencement of a two week intensive training schedule designed to bolster tactical skills and mutual coordination between the two nations.

The 2026 iteration of this high profile engagement marks the 7th Edition of the exercise, reflecting a steady progression in defense diplomacy since its inception. While previous editions have seen significant advancements in joint combat strategies, this year's maneuvers are expected to integrate newer technological platforms and intelligence sharing protocols. The exercise alternates between the two countries, providing troops with diverse geographic challenges to master.



Indian Navy to organise first edition of Commanders' Conference 2026 in New Delhi

The Indian Navy is set to host the first edition of the Commanders' Conference 2026, a critical biannual forum designed to review the maritime security environment and assess the force's operational readiness. Top naval leadership will gather in the national capital to deliberate on a wide range of strategic issues, including the expansion of indigenous shipbuilding, the integration of emerging technologies, and the maintenance of a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific.' The conference serves as a pivotal platform for senior commanders to synchronize long-term naval objectives with evolving geopolitical challenges.

The high-level conclave is officially scheduled to take place from April 14 to 16, 2026. During these three days, the top brass will engage in intense discussions regarding maritime domain awareness and the modernization of the fleet to counter regional threats. While various other windows in April were considered for the naval calendar, the mid-month slot has been formalized for this essential institutional dialogue.



Gujarat Launches the Programme to study the Sports Genomics

Gujarat has pioneered the 'Sports Genomics Programme' to establish an **Athlete Genome Database** ahead of the 2030 Commonwealth Games. By integrating genetic, physiological, and performance data, the initiative aims to identify elite talent early, as genetics account for up to **66% of athletic performance**. Key benefits include tailored training, injury prevention, and optimized rehabilitation. However, the program faces significant ethical hurdles, such as genetic discrimination, privacy risks, and the potential for 'designer athletes.' To balance innovation with integrity, experts emphasize the urgent need for a robust **regulatory and ethical framework** in India.



Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur launches Vikram Sodhi Centre for AI-driven mining systems

IIT Kharagpur has established the Vikram Sodhi Centre of Excellence for AI-enabled geological and mining systems, supported by a ₹15 crore funding commitment over five years. Funded by Vikram Sodhi of Mineros SA and Sun Valley Investments, the center aims to modernize India's mining sector. By integrating artificial intelligence with mining engineering, the hub focuses on the entire value chain—including exploration, predictive maintenance, and ESG analytics—to ensure resource efficiency, operational safety, and environmental sustainability through data-driven innovation.

Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool to be set up with government-backed guarantee to ensure uninterrupted maritime coverage

The Union Cabinet has cleared the establishment of the Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMI Pool) to ensure uninterrupted insurance for Indian vessels. To back this initiative, the government has provided a sovereign guarantee of Rupees 12,980 crore, a move designed to insulate the maritime sector from global geopolitical volatility and sudden withdrawals of international reinsurance support. This pool will provide critical war-risk and cargo insurance, especially for ships navigating through high-risk corridors. By creating a domestic safety net, India aims to reduce its dependence on foreign protection and indemnity clubs while securing the nation's energy and trade supply chains under the Atmanirbhar Bharat framework.



AI powered Prajna Handed to Home Ministry to Boost Security

The Ministry of Home Affairs has received 'Prajna', an indigenous, AI-enabled satellite imaging system developed by DRDO's CAIR. This technology provides real-time decision support to bolster internal security and counter-terrorism. Additionally, the Indian Navy successfully tested the ADC-150, an indigenous air-droppable container. Designed to deliver 150 kg payloads from P8I aircraft, the system enhances naval logistics and emergency response at sea. Both innovations reflect India's progress toward self-reliance in advanced defense technology.



NASA's Nancy Grace Roman Telescope

NASA has finalized the assembly of the **Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope** at Goddard Space Flight Center, targeting an early September 2026 launch via a SpaceX Falcon Heavy, said in a statement released on April 21, 2026. While its 2.4-meter mirror matches

Hubble's size, Roman's field of view is **100 times larger**, allowing it to map the universe 1,000 times faster. Operating from **Lagrange Point 2 (L2)**, its mission includes investigating dark energy, dark matter, and supernovae. Additionally, its advanced **coronagraph** will enable direct imaging of exoplanets. Named after the "Mother of Hubble," this observatory represents NASA's next leap in wide-field cosmic surveying.



Sports

Olympics Transgender Ban 2028

In March 2026, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced a new eligibility policy strictly limiting the female category to biological females. This status is verified through a mandatory gene test screening for the SRY gene, which indicates male sex development. The policy, effective for the 2028 Los Angeles Games, aims to ensure fairness and safety by addressing physical advantages retained after male puberty. It also applies to athletes with Differences in Sex Development (DSD).



Little Andaman Pro 2026 to kick off India's surfing season

The Surfing Federation of India on Tuesday, 31 March, announced the **Little Andaman Pro 2026-National Surf & SUP Championship**, scheduled for April 9-12 at Butler Bay Beach, Little Andaman island. This national championship serves as the season opener and a vital warm-up for India's debut at the **2026 Asian Games** in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan later this year. **Presented by Andaman and Nicobar Tourism and organised by Surfing Federation of India and is sponsored by the TT Group**, the event will bring together top surfers from across the country to compete in the Senior Division across Surfing and Stand-Up Paddle (SUP) disciplines following India's successful acquisition of four Olympic-standard Asian Games quotas.



India to face Bangladesh in SAFF U20 finals in Maldives

In the SAFF U-20 Championship final on April 3, 2026 in Malé, Maldives, title-holders **India** face **Bangladesh**. India secured their spot after a dominant **5-0 semi-final win** over Bhutan, while Bangladesh progressed by edging out Nepal **1-0**. Having already settled for a **1-1 draw** during their earlier group-stage encounter, both regional rivals now compete for the trophy in this highly anticipated rematch. The **South Asian Football Federation (SAFF)** is an association of the football playing nations in South Asia **incorporated in 1997**. The members of the association are Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.



Bhuvneshwar Kumar Becomes First Fast Bowler to Reach 200 IPL Wickets

On April 5, 2026, Bhuvneshwar Kumar made history by becoming the first fast bowler to reach the 200-wicket milestone in the IPL. He achieved this feat by dismissing Chennai Super Kings' Ayush Mhatre at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium.

While leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal was the first overall to reach 200 wickets (in 2024), Bhuvneshwar is the first pacer to join this elite club. A stalwart for Sunrisers Hyderabad, he also holds the record for the most Powerplay wickets (81) and is the only bowler to win back-to-back Purple Caps (2016–2017).



Palak and Mukesh Win ISSF World Cup Gold

At the ISSF (International Shooting Sport Federation) World Cup in **Granada, Spain** Indian shooters **Palak** and **Mukesh Nelavalli** secured gold in the 10m air pistol mixed team event with a **world record score of 487.7**, on 7 April. This historic feat, which also set a senior and junior world record, saw India outperform China and Hungary. **Palak** (scored 243.0), an Asian Games gold medalist, and **Mukesh** (contributed 244.7), a junior world champion, demonstrated elite consistency throughout the competition, making their combined tally to a record-breaking 487.7.



Indian wrestlers win 5 medals at Asian Wrestling Championships in Bishkek

At the **Asian Wrestling Championships 2026** in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan Indian Greco-Roman wrestlers concluded their campaign with a total of **five medals** on April 8, 2026. **Nitesh Siwach** secured silver, while **Prince** and **Sachin Sahrawat** earned bronze medals on

the final day. These followed earlier successes by Lalit Sehrawat (silver) and Sunil Kumar (bronze). Meanwhile, the women's freestyle events have commenced, featuring a full **30-member Indian contingent** split equally across men's freestyle, women's freestyle, and Greco-Roman categories at this continental event.



Sawan Barwal Breaks India's Oldest Marathon Record

At the 2026 Rotterdam Marathon on April 12, 2026, 28-year-old **Army Havildar Sawan Barwal**, from Mandi in Himachal Pradesh, made history by clocking 2:11:58, breaking **Shivnath Singh's 47-year-old national record** of 2:12:00 set in 1978. In a dramatic debut performance, Barwal overcame severe exhaustion and freezing winds that caused him to collapse twice just meters from the finish line. Despite these physical setbacks and a 20th-place finish, he successfully eclipsed India's longest-standing athletics milestone in a race ultimately **won by Ethiopia's Guye Adola**. Marathon distance is officially 42.195 kilometres and the Rotterdam Marathon is considered as a World Athletics Gold Label Road Race.



Mumbai Cricket Association introduces India's first player contract model

The Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) has made history by becoming India's first state body to launch a structured player contract model, effective from the 2026–27 season. The system features a three-tier salary structure ranging from ₹8 lakh to ₹20 lakh, aiming to provide financial security to domestic cricketers not participating in the IPL or international matches. Under President Ajinkya Naik, this initiative ensures dedicated domestic performers receive guaranteed income, further supplementing match fees already matched with BCCI standards.



ISSF Junior World Cup 2026 Begins in Cairo

The ISSF Junior World Cup 2026 commenced in Cairo, Egypt, featuring a massive 71-member Indian contingent. Headlined by Asian Games gold medallist Shiva Narwal and shotgun standout Sabeera Haris, India aims to maintain its global dominance in junior shooting following a record 37-medal haul last year. The competition includes 18 medal events across rifle, pistol, and shotgun disciplines.

Laureus World Sports Awards 2026 Held in Madrid

The 2026 Laureus World Sports Awards in Madrid celebrated elite achievements from 2025. Tennis icons Carlos Alcaraz and Aryna Sabalenka were named Sportsman and Sportswoman of the Year, respectively. Paris Saint-Germain secured Team of the Year following their maiden Champions League title. Other key winners included Lando Norris (Breakthrough), Rory McIlroy (Comeback), and Lamine Yamal (Young Sportsperson). Gymnastics legend Nadia Comăneci received the Lifetime Achievement Award, marking 50 years since her historic perfect Olympic 10.

India among 12 countries selected for FIFA Women's Development Programme

India has been selected as one of 12 nations for the **FIFA Women's Development Programme (Commercial Strategy 2026)** on Wednesday April 22, 2026, following a successful AIFF proposal. Running from May to October 2026, the online initiative will provide tailored tools for stakeholders to build sustainable commercial models. This capacity building is crucial as **AFC club licensing** requirements approach for Indian Women's League (IWL) clubs. By focusing on fan engagement and sponsorship strategies, the programme aims to capitalize on India's recent youth-level successes, like the ASMITA league, to transform the 'sleeping giant' into a commercially viable powerhouse in women's football.

Miscellaneous

World Theatre Day 2026

World Theatre Day was first initiated by the International Theatre Institute (ITI) in 1961. The first official celebration took place in 1962, coinciding with the opening of the 'Theatre of Nations' season in Paris. For 2026, the theme is 'Theatre and a Culture of Peace,' with the international message delivered by actor Willem Dafoe. The day aims to promote the cultural significance of the performing arts and its power to foster global harmony and social dialogue.



E. A. Rajendran passes away at the age of 71

Veteran actor and director E.A. Rajendran, who passed away at 71 on March 26, 2026, was a prominent figure in the Malayalam film industry. An alumnus of the National School of Drama, he was known for his versatility in both character and villainous roles across nearly 60 films, including the classic Kaliyattam. Beyond cinema, he was a leading television producer and served as the Chairman of the State Horticulture Corporation. He is survived by his wife and son.

Nandamuri Balakrishna honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award at IFFD 2026

In March 2026, veteran Telugu actor Nandamuri Balakrishna was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the International Film Festival of Delhi (IFFD). The ceremony, held at Bharat

Mandapam, celebrated his illustrious 50-year career and significant contributions to Indian cinema. The event featured a special screening of his film Bhagavanth Kesari, which previously won Best Telugu Film at the National Film Awards. This recognition follows his 2025 Padma Bhushan award, cementing his legacy as a cinematic icon.

India tops global list in issuing compliance certificates under Nagoya Protocol

According to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), India leads the world in implementing the **Nagoya Protocol**, issuing over **56 percent** of all global **Internationally Recognised Certificates of Compliance (IRCCs)**. With 3,561 certificates out of 6,311, India significantly outpaces France (964) and Spain (320). These IRCCs confirm that genetic resources were accessed with prior informed consent and mutually agreed terms. This achievement highlights India's commitment to transparency and the equitable sharing of biological benefits.

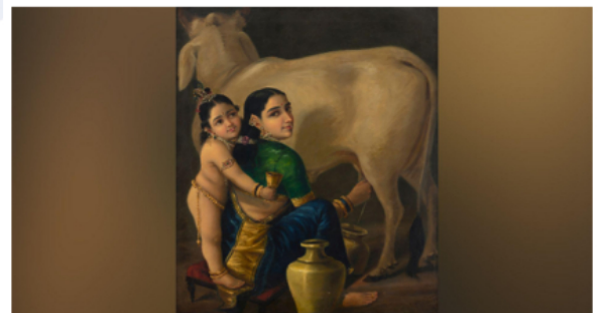
RBI allows exchange of INR at foreign exchange counters in international airports

The **RBI** on Friday 3 April has updated its **money-changing policy**, permitting both **residents and non-residents** to exchange Indian currency at **international airport departure halls**. Earlier, such counters were permitted only to buy Indian rupees from non-residents and sell foreign currency to them. This facility is available at forex counters within **Duty-Free or Security Hold Areas** beyond immigration. By amending the **Master Direction on Money Changing Activities**, the central bank aims to provide greater convenience for all international travelers departing from India.



A Raja Ravi Varma masterpiece set a new record as India's most expensive painting

Raja Ravi Varma's 'Yashoda and Krishna' has made history as the most expensive Indian painting, sold for Rs. 167.20 crore (approximately 17.98 million USD) at a Mumbai auction. Purchased by Cyrus S. Poonawalla, the 1890s masterpiece depicts a tender mythological scene with Varma's signature realism. This sale surpasses previous records held by M.F. Husain, underscoring Varma's legacy in blending European oil techniques with Indian divinity and his enduring influence on India's global artistic standing.



Sudha Murty's book, 'Tides of Time', explores Indian history through the murals of the New Parliament House

Vice President C. P. Radhakrishnan recently released 'Tides of Time: Bharat's History through Murals in Parliament', authored by Sudha Murty.

The book explores India's civilizational journey through 124 mural panels displayed in Samvidhan Sadan. Spanning from the Indus Valley Civilization to the freedom struggle, it highlights historical icons like Chanakya and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The Vice President emphasized India's legacy as the 'Mother of Democracy,' citing ancient republican systems like Vaishali, while praising Murty for making history accessible.

Union Agriculture Minister reviews impact of heavy rainfall and hailstorms across multiple states

The Union Agriculture Minister has issued a high-alert advisory following IMD forecasts of two incoming Western Disturbances expected to trigger rainfall, thunderstorms, and potential hailstorms across Northwest India. With peak activity anticipated between April 3–4 and again around April 7, the Ministry has specifically urged farmers to delay harvesting activities to protect standing Rabi crops from moisture and wind damage. While these atmospheric systems are expected to maintain 'near normal to below normal' temperatures nationwide, the government is closely monitoring logistics and supply chains to mitigate any adverse impact on the ongoing harvest season during this volatile weather period

Unnat Krishi Mahotsav 2026 scheduled in Raisen to promote agricultural training and exhibitions

The three-day national agriculture fair, Unnat Krishi Mahotsav 2026, is set to commence at Dussehra Maidan from April 11–13, aiming to showcase the latest advancements in agritech and organic farming. Organized with a focus on farmer prosperity, the event is centered around the official theme: 'Empowered by Government Schemes, Middleman-Free Markets.' Agriculture officials stated that the fair will serve as a vital platform for direct interaction between farmers and technology providers, emphasizing the elimination of intermediaries to ensure better price realization.

The mahotsav will feature over 200 stalls, live demonstrations of drone-based pesticide spraying, and workshops on maximizing benefits from central and state welfare schemes. By highlighting success stories of direct-to-consumer sales, the government intends to reinforce a transparent market ecosystem that aligns with the broader national goal of enhancing rural livelihoods through structural digital and logistical interventions.



Divya Singh Cycles to Everest Base Camp

Divya Singh, a 28-year-old young adventurer and teacher from **Gorakhpur Uttar Pradesh**, became **the first Indian female**, recently completing a remarkable 14-day cycling expedition from Kathmandu to **Everest Base Camp (about 5,364 metres)** on April 5. Despite freezing temperatures and low oxygen, **she cycled up to 12 hours daily**, often carrying her bike over impassable terrain. Her journey, which has gone viral, marks a significant milestone for Indian women in endurance sports. By overcoming extreme physical exhaustion and harsh mountain trails, Divya's feat serves as a powerful inspiration for aspiring athletes nationwide.

World Health Day 2026

The International One Health Summit is being held in Lyon, France, from April 5 to 7, 2026. This high-level event is a flagship initiative of France's G7 presidency for 2026.

The summit concludes on April 7, intentionally coinciding with World Health Day. The 2026 theme for World Health Day is 'Together for Health. Stand with Science,' emphasizing the 'One Health' approach—the vital interconnection between human, animal, and environmental health. The event brings together global leaders and scientists to translate research into actionable policies for pandemic prevention and global health security.



RBI Projects India's GDP Growth at 7.6 percent for FY26

The Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday April 8 has projected a **7.6% GDP growth** for FY26, driven by robust domestic demand and manufacturing. However, Governor Sanjay Malhotra anticipates a moderation to **6.9% in FY27** due to geopolitical tensions and surging energy costs. While private investment remains promising, quarterly growth estimates for early FY27 were slightly lowered. Additionally, the RBI forecasts **consumer price inflation at 4.6%** for FY27, maintaining a cautious stance amidst global economic uncertainties and inflationary pressures. India's foreign exchange reserves stood at **USD 697.1 billion as of April 3.**



Indian Cricket Pioneer C.D. Gopinath Dies

Indian cricket lost a legend with the passing of **Chingleput Doraiswamy Gopinath** at 96 on April 9, 2026. As the final survivor of **India's inaugural Test-winning squad**, his death concludes a foundational chapter. After two decades of winless struggles following their **1932 debut** against England, India finally achieved glory in **February 1952**. In Chennai, they **defeated England** by an innings and eight runs, securing their first-ever Test victory, a monumental milestone that transformed the nation's cricketing trajectory. Gopinath's career, though brief, remains significant due to his role in a defining chapter of Indian cricket. He was also the second-oldest living Test cricketer at the time of his passing.

Nation celebrates 108th anniversary of Champaran Satyagraha

10 April marks the 108th anniversary of the **Champaran Satyagraha**, launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1917. This movement targeted the oppressive **Tinkathia system**, which forced Bihar's farmers to grow indigo. Initiated after Raj Kumar Shukla's persistent requests, it was Gandhi's first Indian experiment with **non-violent resistance**. The struggle successfully led to the system's abolition by 1918. Beyond securing agrarian justice, this landmark event established Gandhi as a mass leader and fundamentally shaped India's broader independence movement.



NTPC, EDF Sign MoU for Nuclear Power Projects

On April 8, 2026, **NTPC Limited** signed an MoU with **Électricité de France (EDF)**, a French multinational electric utility company owned by the government of France, to collaborate on nuclear energy development. The agreement focuses on deploying EDF's **EPR technology**, assessing feasibility, and identifying potential project sites in India. Beyond infrastructure, both entities will prioritize localization and workforce training. This partnership supports NTPC's goal of reaching **149 GW capacity by 2032** including **60 GW from renewable sources** and aligns with India's broader strategy for clean, sustainable energy security through advanced nuclear power.

Large-scale agriculture festival begins in Raisen, attracting thousands of farmers

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh served as the Chief Guest for the main inaugural ceremony of the Unnat Krishi Mahotsav 2026, held on April 11 at Dussehra Maidan in Raisen. The three-day national event aims to empower the farming community through technology-driven solutions and modern infrastructure. Addressing a large gathering, the Minister emphasized a lab to field roadmap, focusing on smart machinery and middleman-free markets. The festival features over 300 stalls showcasing innovations like drones and solar pumps to boost agricultural productivity and rural income.

Department of Expenditure clarifies that advisory on aligning state bonus policies with promotion of pulses, oilseeds and millets is not mandatory

As part of the national roadmap to achieve 'Atmanirbharata' in the food sector, the government has intensified its focus on diversifying crop patterns and boosting the domestic production of pulses and oilseeds. Central to this strategy is the reduction of India's heavy reliance on imported edible oils, which currently puts a significant strain on the national exchequer. By incentivizing local cultivation and infrastructure, the initiative aims to provide price stability for consumers and higher income for the farming community through sustainable land use.

A cornerstone of this mission was the official launch of the National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) in 2021. This centrally sponsored scheme was introduced with a massive financial outlay to specifically target the expansion of oil palm cultivation across the North-Eastern states and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. While related agricultural reforms were introduced in 2020 and 2022, it was the August 2021 directive that established this dedicated mission to bridge the production gap in the vegetable oil sector.

42nd Anniversary of Siachen Day and Operation Meghdoot

On Siachen Day April 13, 2026, the Indian Army and Air Force honored the martyrs of **Operation Meghdoot, launched in 1984** (42 years ago) to secure the world's highest battlefield in Northern Ladakh. This historic mission involved airlifting troops to extreme glacial heights, establishing India's strategic dominance. Today, both forces celebrate this legacy of endurance, with the Air Force providing critical logistics and casualty evacuations, while the Northern Command of Indian Army salutes the unwavering courage of soldiers guarding these frozen frontiers.

Nation pays tribute to Jallianwala Bagh massacre martyrs

On the **107th anniversary** of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, 13 April, the country pays homage to the hundreds of innocents **killed by British forces in 1919** in the Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar. **President Droupadi Murmu** said the nation will always remain grateful to them. She expressed confidence that their spirit of patriotism will continue to inspire everyone to move forward on the path of national service with dedication and loyalty. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Home Minister Amit Shah honored the martyrs, noting how the tragedy ignited a national consciousness and a resolute drive for independence. The Jallianwala Bagh National Memorial Trust observed the day, commemorating the unwavering courage that continues to inspire patriotism and the protection of democratic values.



Bollywood Actress Sayani Gupta named Person of the Year by Harvard South Asian Association

The Harvard South Asian Association has honored Bollywood actress Sayani Gupta as its **2026 Person of the Year**, celebrating her exceptional impact on cinema, storytelling, and cultural representation. Last year (in 2025) **Chef Vikas Khanna received the same award**. This prestigious accolade is awarded annually to individuals who significantly influence South Asian identity within the global public sphere.

Later this month, Gupta will be formally recognized during a ceremony **at Harvard University**. The award highlights her dedication to authentic representation, reinforcing her role as a pivotal figure in shaping the narrative of South Asians in the international arts community.

RBI liberalises branch rules for NBFCs

The Reserve Bank of India, on Thursday 16 April, has introduced a revised framework **granting NBFCs** greater operational flexibility to **expand their branch networks** without prior central bank approval. While most NBFCs benefit from this ease of doing business, deposit-taking entities face a calibrated approach based on financial health. Specifically, those with **Net Owned Funds exceeding Rs 50 crore and an AA credit rating or higher** can operate nationwide; others are restricted to their home states. Additionally, the RBI updated Core Investment Company (CIC) rules, replacing mandatory closures of non-compliant overseas offices with a formal review mechanism.



India Targets Cocoa Self-Sufficiency by 2040

To support the **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** vision, India has unveiled a strategic roadmap, on April 16, 2026, to achieve cocoa self-sufficiency by **2040**, aiming to cut its annual \$866 million import bill. The plan unfolds in **three phases**: establishing a **National Mission on Cocoa** and seed gardens (2026–2028), empowering one lakh farmers through digital registries and training (2028–2030), and expanding cultivation to one lakh hectares (2030–2035). By scaling production and

processing infrastructure, India targets meeting **50% of domestic demand** internally by 2035, eventually becoming a globally competitive cocoa producer. In the final phase from 2035 to 2040, India aims to become fully self-sufficient in cocoa production and emerge as a global processing hub.

Mumbai hosted the Miss Sake India 2026 pageant

On April 17, 2026, Mumbai hosted the Miss Sake India pageant, where Nishita Yogesh Antarkar was crowned the winner. Organized by Hirohama India Pvt. Ltd., the initiative serves as a cultural bridge between India and Japan, promoting the traditions of Japanese sake.

Antarkar, a business owner and Kathak dancer, succeeded previous titleholder Akansha Shrivastava. Runners-up included Priyanka Sarkar and Sakshi Khari. The event, attended by Japanese diplomats, highlights strengthening bilateral ties and sustainable regional development through cultural diplomacy.



Meghalaya grants official language status to Khasi and Garo after long demand

The Meghalaya cabinet, led by Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, approved the Meghalaya Official Languages Ordinance 2026 on April 16. This historic decision grants Khasi and Garo official language status alongside English, repealing the 2005 Act. The move aims to enhance governance, allowing these languages in Assembly debates, gazette notifications,

and recruitment exams. This legislative shift also serves to strengthen Meghalaya's ongoing demand for the inclusion of Khasi and Garo in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.



World Heritage Day 2026

Every year on April 18, the world celebrates World Heritage Day, also known as the International Day for Monuments and Sites. The 2026 theme, 'Emergency Response for Living Heritage in Contexts of Conflicts and Disasters,' shifts focus toward protecting intangible traditions like rituals and art forms during crises. Led by UNESCO and ICOMOS, the day highlights the urgency of safeguarding both physical sites and community practices. Currently, India ranks highly with 44 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, reflecting its vast cultural and natural legacy.

Vice President concludes landmark visit to Sri Lanka; visits plantation sector project sites in Nuwara Eliya

The visit of Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan to Sri Lanka in April 2026 has been hailed as a significant turn in regional diplomacy. This mission is distinguished as the first-ever bilateral visit by an Indian Vice President to the island nation, marking a high-level diplomatic outreach. During the visit, discussions focused on enhancing maritime security, energy connectivity, and

cultural exchange. The engagement reinforces India's Neighborhood First policy, emphasizing collaborative growth and stability in the Indian Ocean region. This historic milestone sets a new precedent for executive-level dialogue, further cementing the long-standing strategic partnership and economic cooperation between the two neighboring countries.

India's First Petroglyph Conservation Park in Ladakh

Ladakh's Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena laid the foundation for India's first **Petroglyph Conservation Park** at the Sindhu Ghat in Leh along the Indus River on 18th April 2026. Launched to mark World Heritage Day, this initiative, a collaboration between the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** and local authorities, aims to protect prehistoric rock carvings from urban expansion and tourism. Ladakh's petroglyphs, featuring ancient scripts and wildlife like the ibex, represent a vital archaeological record. By relocating endangered carvings to a curated space, the park will promote **responsible heritage tourism** and scientific preservation, safeguarding Ladakh's legacy as an ancient cultural crossroads.

